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"PRACTICE WITH THEORY AND SCIENCE"

NUMBER 20.

Why is the CHAMPION Binder worth more to the farmer than any other?

It is better made, better finished, has proved more durable, will do better work, and with less labor on the part of the team and operator than any other Binder on earth.

The warranty that we give on CHAMPION Binders is the best evidence of our sincerity in making the above claims. For while the manufacturers of some other Binders simply warrant their machines to work, and others again only warrant theirs to cut the grain, (and they may fail entirely to bind and yet fill the warranty), the CHAMPION is fully warranted, not only to cut and bind the grain, but to do it as well as it can be done by any other Binder. If there were any words to make this warranty still stronger, we would do it. Grain of medium height, on smooth ground, can be harvested in fair shape by most of the Harvesters and Binders that are sold at the present time, but there are so many conditions of ground and grain in which the machines made by our competitors cannot compete with the CHAMPION or do as good work, that it would be ruinous to them to give the same warranty that we do.

The warranty shows our confidence as manufacturers in the machines we build, and the security given the farmer who buys the CHAMPION.

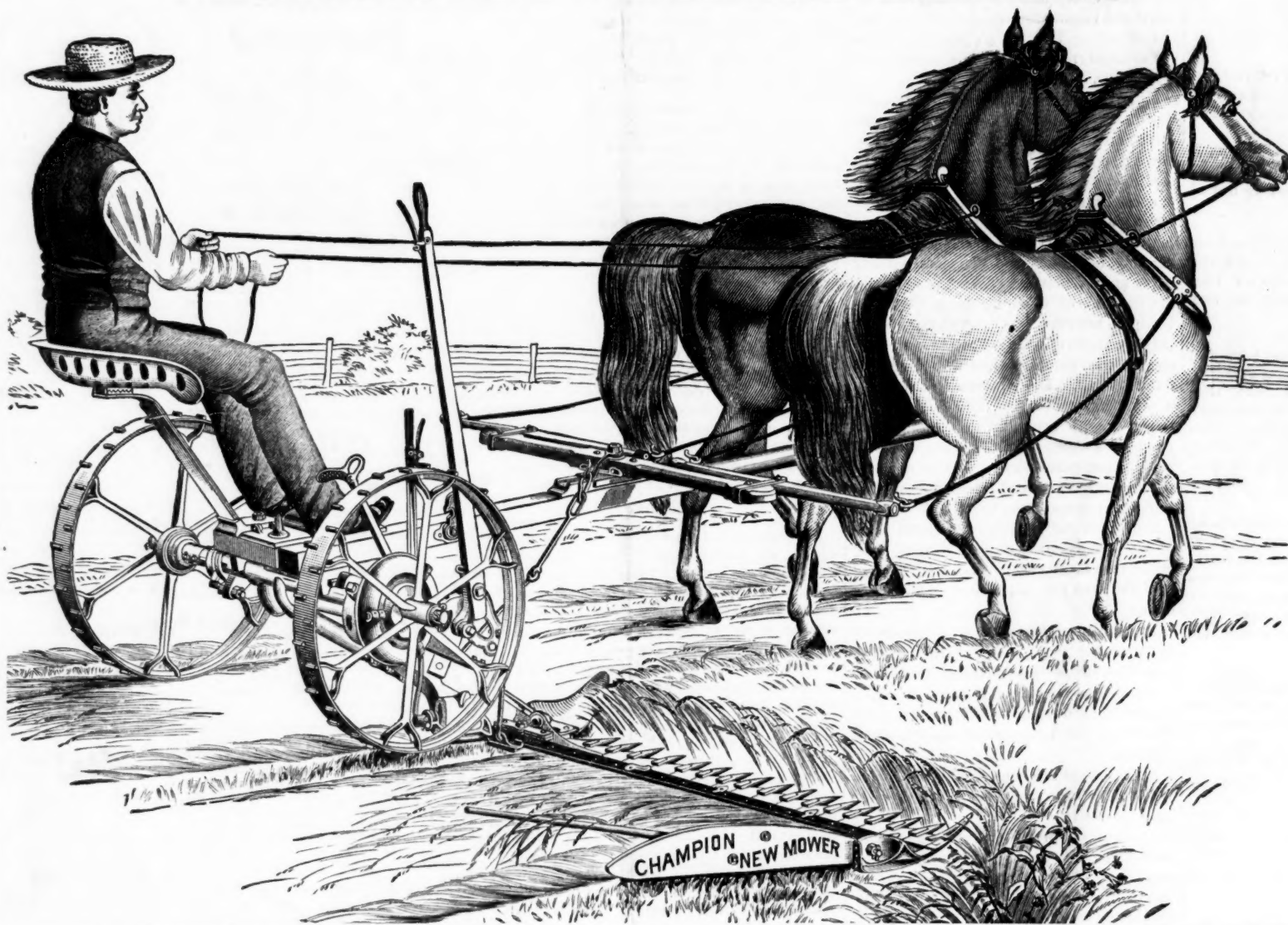
There are other and exclusive advantages which the CHAMPION possesses that are not used on other Harvesters and Binders.

1st.—There is the Relief Rake at the inside end of the cutter bar, which keeps this corner clear of grass or other short stuff, rakes the lodged grain into the mouth of the elevator, and enables the machine to cut a full swath in all conditions of grain. Some of our customers, who have used other Binders that did not have this rake, declare that to each machine it is worth at least \$25. Of course we could build the CHAMPION machine much cheaper by not having this valuable device, but a machine is not really complete without it, and to a farmer purchasing a machine it should certainly make the CHAMPION worth at least \$5 more than other Binders. This device is owned exclusively by us, and cannot be used on any other machine.

2nd.—The springs in the canvas bearings make one set of canvases last at least as long as two sets where the springs are not used, and this means not less than \$15 when you must buy a new set at least once during the life of even the poorest machine. The springs used on the CHAMPION not only save the canvas, but also the bother of tightening and loosening the same according to the changes of temperature. This device should certainly make the CHAMPION worth at least \$5 more than a machine on which these springs are not used. These canvas springs are patented by us and have been successfully used on the CHAMPION Harvester for the past eight years, and we caution parties against using any similar device that infringes on this patent.

3rd.—The Butter or grain adjuster used on the CHAMPION is superior to

CHAMPION MOWERS AND BINDERS.



The Best Machines for the Farmer to Buy.

The Most Satisfactory Machines for the Farmer to Use.

The Most Convenient Machines for the Farmer to Handle.

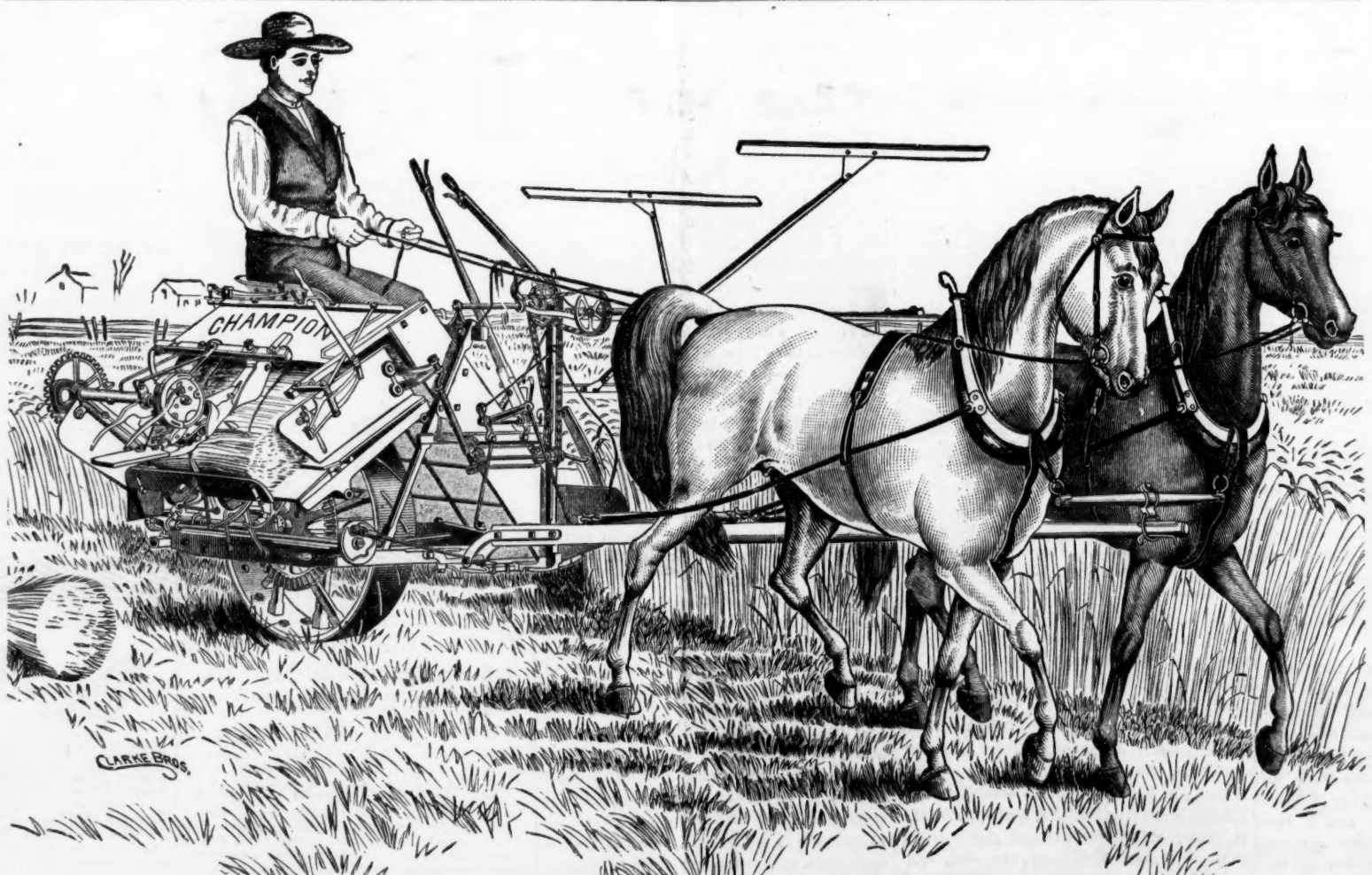
The Most Reliable Machines for the Farmer to Work.

The Most Desirable Machines for the Farmer to Own.

And altogether the most PRACTICAL and SERVICEABLE and ECONOMICAL and DURABLE Machines that can be found for the Farmers' Grass and Grain Fields.

In the CHAMPION Mowing and Harvesting Machines the farmer not only gets the best that are made, but the full worth of his money every time. They are constructed in the very best manner, of the very best steel and iron and wood, and each part is made of the material best suited for the work. Where wood answers best we have wood, where iron answers best we have iron, and where steel answers best we have steel. It is true economy for us to build the best machines, even if the profits are smaller; it is true economy for you to buy the best machines even if the first cost is a few dollars greater than others. The CHAMPION machines will do your work—the Mower will cut all kinds of grass, and the Binder will cut and bind all kinds of small grain that grow, no matter in what condition; they will be as light draft or lighter than other machines doing the same work; they will be easily managed; they will cause you less trouble and expense for repairs; they will make less delay in haying and harvest time; and will do more work and be more durable than any other Mower or Harvester and Binder that is made. The CHAMPION Machines are acknowledged to be superior to all others in quality of material and workmanship, in mechanical design and construction, and in the work they are capable of doing in the field. We solicit a careful examination by farmers.

The CHAMPION is the only Mower on which the driver can fold the cutter bar without leaving his seat or stopping the team, and the knife will run as freely when the bar is folded as when it is down. On the CHAMPION, when the cutter bar is lifted over an obstruction or folded to pass a tree, the weight of the cutter bar is carried on the inside shoe, which rests on the ground, and not on the horses' necks. On all other Mowers both ends of the cutter bar must be lifted clear off the ground and the weight carried on the pole. On the CHAMPION either end of the cutter bar can be lifted to pass an obstruction, while on other Mowers the inside end of the cutter bar must be lifted, as well as the outside, in order to get the bar over an obstruction, even though it is at the outer end, thus wasting labor and grass unnecessarily. The CHAMPION is the only Mower that has a foot lever by means of which the guards can be tilted up, the cutter bar raised to pass all ordinary obstructions, or prevented from dropping down into dead furrows. On other Mowers the driver has to handle so many levers to get the cutter bar in the right position for passing obstructions that he must either stop his team to make the necessary change, or run into obstructions.



CHAMPION BINDERS AND MOWERS.

the cheap and frail butter canvas used on other machines. These canvases and the gears that operate the same have to be replaced by new ones at a cost of at least \$2, about once a year. This fact should not be overlooked by the farmer when purchasing a new machine, and should make the CHAMPION worth at least \$2.50 more than machines that use this frail and complicated device. Besides, the Champion Butter works very much better, moves the short grain in better shape to the knoter, and in the long grain, where the canvas butter is entirely useless, the Champion Butter rakes the long grain down to the packers, and thus prevents clogging between the packers and the elevators.

4th.—The superiority of the CHAMPION Cutter Bar and Guards is easily recognized. Our wrought iron steel-surfaced guards are made T-shaped where they connect to the angle-steel cutter bar, and are secured to the same by two rivets, making it impossible for them to ever get out of line. Compare them with the cheap and flimsy guards used on other harvesters, and you will be convinced that the CHAMPION Cutter Bar and Guards are superior to all others, and for that reason ought to be worth more money. To test the strength of guards, step on the points; you will find that on other harvesters you can force them out of line.

5th.—We furnish an extra Knife or Sickle with each machine, and this costs at least \$5, and should make the CHAMPION worth that much more than any other machine.

We will mention a few other good features of the CHAMPION. Everybody recognizes them as being valuable, but we will leave to the judgment of the farmer the relative merits of these, and the devices used on other machines for the same purposes.

The canvas runs close to the knife, leaving no space for short stuff to accumulate, and on this account the grain is carried across in better shape on the CHAMPION than is possible on machines where the canvas is several inches back of the knife.

The sections have triangular pieces cut out of the back, which keep the guards clean of gum and dirt.

The pitman is adjustable so as to regulate the throw of the knife, and also for taking up lost motion.

The main frame and gearing on the CHAMPION are much simpler than on other machines.

The axle is bolted rigidly to the center of the main frame, which adds greatly to the strength of this very important part of the machine.

The Binder gear-wheels and nearly all other iron parts are annealed until they are as tough and strong as wrought iron.

Our Knotter is the same that has worked so well for the last three years, and it has been simplified to the extent that when a part gets worn a little it need not be thrown away and replaced by a new Knotter. Neither does it require an expert to adjust it, as there are no fine-haired fixings about it; any farmer can, by the use of a screw-driver, adjust the CHAMPION Knotter, take up all lost motion caused by wear, and make it last as long as the other parts of the machine.

THE WARDER, BUSHNELL & GLESSNER COMPANY, Manufacturers, Springfield, O., Chicago, Ill., and Jackson, Mich.

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IN USE.

Labels on the machine include: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z.

Poetry.

WHY?

Heart of me, why do you sigh?
Why drop your eyelids, pale and shy,
Like snowflakes that in violet lie—
Why do you sigh, my heart?
Sweetest, wherefore do you weep—
Till the flowers that May winds steep,
When the day hath sunk to sleep,
Seem from beads of dew to peep—
Why do you weep, my sweet?
O my love, whence come this glow,
Like the sunset on the snow,
Which on your fair face doth show—
Why do you blush, my queen?
Must I speak your answer, dear?
Listen then, and you will hear
Why you sigh and weep and blush,
Why I love you, my dear;
Sing, O sing, ye birds that sing,
Answer, music of the sea;
Spin, old earth to melody—
For my one love loveth me—
Doth she not, my heart?

—Amelia Rice in *May Harp*.

CANZONETTE.

Tell me not where roses blow—
Tell me, where do roses grow
When their sweet leaves are by one
Perish 'neath the rain and sun?
As I queried, came reply
From a voice that nestled by:
"Roses, when earth's beauty dies,
Bloom afresh in Paradise."
Say not where affections flow—
Tell me where our life-veins go,
When our senses breath to breath,
Chill into all remembrance?
As I queried, came reply
From the love, close nestled by:
"Earthly loves with souls arise
Still to live in Paradise."
—Ledy W. H. Williams.

Miscellaneous.

THE DOCTOR'S ELDEST DAUGHTER.

"Why don't you make 'em pay?" cried Sophronia in a pretty passion, and twirling the end of her apron strings savagely in her fingers.

"Make 'em pay? La! who could?" exclaimed her mother. "How silly you talk, Phrony; who ever heard of a country doctor dunning folks?"

"Well, and who supposes a country doctor is going to slave year-in and year-out, riding over country in all kinds of weather in a gig as worn out as himself, getting up at unearthly hours, and doing fidgety old women and cranky babies, all for the sake of a cold 'Thank you—say?' demanded the girl, in a heat.

"Who supposes? Why, everybody," said her mother, with a short, unpleasant laugh. "It's always been so, and it always will be. The doctor is the last one paid; if he ever is; then he's lucky if he don't have to take off a lot from his bill."

"And act like a beggar girl of a penny thrown to him," exploded the doctor's daughter. "I wouldn't answer their calls and be at their beck and nod."

"Oh, you can't do that," said her mother, with the easy resignation of one who long ago has given up struggling with fate. "You can't pick and choose between your patients, for it's the richest ones that don't pay till they're obliged to. Folks forget, Phrony, that they've been sick, when they're up and around. It's natural. I've been all over it time and again, with your pa, and he don't see no help for it; no more do I."

"Pa is so easy," said Sophronia. "He'd laugh and tell stories with old Judge Bennett just the same as if he hadn't waited a year to see his money. And just think how he carried the judge all through that fever, when every one said he must die!"

"Well, I sh'd like more money," declared Sophronia, walking off discontentedly to the window and gazing out.

"I'm free to confess that I should, too," said her mother, and the round face lengthened out to allow anxious lines to come on its surface. "But it's for your pa that I want it, Phrony," and as she spoke she abruptly thrust her needle in the sheet she was turning, laid it on the table, and desisted it, come over to Sophronia at the window.

"I don't but what he's breaking down," she whispered, as if afraid to hear her own voice. "He's got so he can't sleep nights."

"Oh, ma," cried the girl, with a chill at her heart.

"Yes—and he worries 'cause, you know, there's the mortgage and some other things that we owe"—the blue eyes looked anxiously into the younger brown ones.

"There wouldn't be," cried Sophronia, passionately, and turning away from the window, "if he was only paid what is his due."

"Well, but he isn't; so what's the use in talking," broke in the older woman.

"And your pa worries over his cases, too, and because he hadn't laid up anything for his family—and I don't know what he don't worry over. I'm most as nervous as he is. And then the next morning, up he has to fly, and work like a dog till night again."

Sophronia stood still. The doctor's wife went on:

"Sometimes I don't know but what I ought to take summer boarders, and help him out."

"Mother?"

"Yes; 'tisn't a pleasant thing to do, to be sure, city folks are so stuck up, and they'll want front rooms, and they don't like pie, and I should get fretted most to death every day of my life, I s'pose—but for all that, I don't know but what it's my duty to do it. She heaved a sigh, as if this were a drop too much, and lapsed into silence.

Sophronia rushed from the room, feeling as if every prospective summer boarder were after her, and never stopping till her own room was reached, nevertheless had ample time during the flight over the stairs to be stung into new misery by the thought:

"Why don't I, the doctor's eldest daughter, do something to help my father?"

"What can I do, pray tell?" She turned on herself when, with the door closed and locked she could be alone with her fright and grief into which the mere mention of her father's falling health had plunged her.

"Not the least thing in the world am I good for," she cried, her brown eyes filled with angry tears. "Teach school, I guess so. The idea! I've never touched a piano, so I can't exactly give music lessons. Of course I don't know how to embroider, nor to paint. If I'd been a city girl, there might be a chance now to save pa; but country girls can't do anything. Oh, oh, oh! to think just an hour ago I was fretting because I couldn't make presents at Christmas just like other girls!—and now—oh, pa!"

The girl flung herself in an agony of tears down by her little white bed, to sob out remorse, sorrow, shame and the other nameless emotions that overburdened her young heart. "Phrony," called a shrill, childish treble, "I want to come in."

This last being emphasized by a smart rapping of small boot-heels on the base of the door, the eldest daughter jumped up from her knees, and made haste to turn the key.

"You needn't break the door down, Abby," she said a bit crossly.

"Why, I didn't break the door," said a small child in a dingy brown dress, a crop of short, dingy brown hair to match, and a thin, sorrowful face; and dropping to her knees, she examined the door carefully where the boots had been applied. "Now; not a single weest, teeniest break has it got. Oh, Sophronia Tucker, you told an awful big lie. Where d'ye s'pose you'll go to when you die?"

She got up from her knees, and rubbing her hands, which were also brown and grimy, on her long suffering dress, surveyed her sister in virtuous silence.

"Oh ridiculous child!" exclaimed Sophronia. "Well, what do you want? Come in and shut the door."

"I'm coming," Abby advanced, and carefully closing the door, suddenly whirled around and walked up to the eldest daughter. "I'm all tornd up," she said.

"I should think you were," cried Sophronia, seizing the flapping end of the slack breathless thus presented to her. "No need to tell of it. Mercy! what a sight!" as the gown seemed to shrink away from her examining fingers, into a multitude of little catcomered, zigzag rents, as if each were saying, don't scold me, I'm very small. "Now, Abby Tucker, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! Who do you suppose is going to mend this horrible dress—say?"

"Why, you," said Abby, turning around to survey her sister out of astonished eyes. "Don't feel bad, Phrony, you can do it real good," she added, pleasantly.

"I? of course I've got to do it," said Sophronia, with a twitch that sent Abby back again. "Do stand still."

"You asked who'd do it?" said Abby.

"Well never mind; oh, dear me, it will take a whole morning to make this dress decent; a whole morning, Abby Tucker. How did you tear it?"

"I was over at Jimmy Hine's, and we were looking at his pigs, and—and it tore," said Abby, bringing up suddenly.

"Tore? Well, the pigs couldn't have tore it. What were you doing?" asked Sophronia, getting up for her work basket.

"Looking at the pigs," said Abby, in a shrill and decided crescendo, "I told you once."

"Abby Tucker," said her sister, bringing the basket and two or three pins from the cushion, "if you don't tell me how you tore that dress, I shall just hand you over to ma. You'd hate to worry her, you know." The brown eyes looking down into the little sorrowful face, were so uncompromising that the child burst out, nervously twisting her fingers. "I did tell you."

"You did not," said Sophronia, sitting down and beginning to pin several flapping edges together. "Be quick now."

"Ma and Jimmy were on the fence—and—and—he said I couldn't jump down as quick as he could, and—and—I said I could; and we jumped, and a horrible bad old nail caught me, and—Mr. Hine ought to be ashamed to have such a fence. He don't 'tend to things like pa," she added brightly.

But all her hopes of thus diverting her auditor from the offense in view, fell flat. The mention of "pa" only served to exasperate Sophronia's over-wrought nerves.

"As big a girl as you are to be climbing fences like a boy, Abby Tucker!" she cried scornfully. "Now run and get your other dress, and come straight back here. There, go on."

She thrust in the last pin, and gave the small back a little shove.

"If I wasn't a real big girl, I couldn't climb so nice," observed Abby with pride, and moving off gladly. "Last year I couldn't; I was only so high, I guess."

She stooped down and spread her fingers to the height of an imaginary, insignificant no climber. "I always fell on my nose then. Jimmy says I can do it most as good as he can now."

"Go and get your pink dress," commanded Sophronia sharply. "Do you hear?"

"Yes," said Abby, pleasantly, "I do," and resuming her feet, she flapped off, dropping pins by the way, to presently return, the pink calico crushed within her arms, and the rents yawning in their original openness.

Through the rest of the morning hours the doctor's eldest daughter was compelled to sit quietly at the mercy of her tormenting thoughts; for what woman ever drove off an harassing worry with the point of a needle?

In and out with every twist went the new, stinging conviction, "You ought to help your father."

In despair, Sophronia threw down the brown dress more than once and paced the floor, shaking off the hateful, gnaw-like visitors; but they always came back in greater numbers when the needle was resumed.

The only hope of relief was in seeing the last stitch taken, when she would fly at some active work that might shut the door of her mind against all such invasions.

But before the last stitch appeared, in came neighbor Hine's wife.

"I come right up stairs," she announced, "seeing I couldn't find your ma. I declare, if you ain't always a mending."

"It becomes necessary," said Sophronia, with a short laugh, "when there are three

boys in the family—no, four, I might as well say, counting Abby."

"You do mend splendid," said Mrs. Hine, depositing her ample figure in the most slender of Sophronia's chairs. "Dear me, it's astonishing how stairs do tire me. I wish I had a daughter to help me out. I'd be willing to pay a good price to get my mending-basket lowered every Saturday night."

Sophronia gave a sudden shiver, her breath came thick and fast, and she dropped her needle. "Oh, Mrs. Hine," putting a glowing face in front of the large perspiring one—"do you mean what you say, do you?"

"What did I say—that you mend real splendid? Yes I do; everybody says so. Why only the other day, Miss—"

"Oh, I don't mean that," said Sophronia, patting quickly the fat arm, "the other thing. Do you mean it, dear Mrs. Hine?"

Neighbor Hine's wife wrinkled her brows and stared into space. "Oh, what did I say? That I wished I had a daughter—and I do, just like you. Or if one of my boys was only big enough, 'p'raps you might both make a match. That would suit me real first rate. Why, only the other day Mr. Hine said, he—"

"Oh, I don't mean that either," cried the girl, jumping to her feet, her eyes sparkling with excitement. "You said—you said that you'd be willing to pay anyone who would help you do your mending. Didn't you now, Mrs. Hine. Oh, do say 'yes.'"

"To be sure I did," cried Mrs. Hine, in astonishment, "and what's more, I'll say it again. I'd give anything if there was anybody in Bingham who'd take in mending."

"I will," cried Sophronia, erect and lithe, her young hands clasped together joyfully.

Mrs. Hine jumped to her feet with the spring of a feather bed set in motion. "Why? Why are the doctor's daughter, she gasped."

"His eldest daughter," said Sophronia, with a proud smile, "who has at last found something that she can do to help her father."

"I didn't know as you were poor," said neighbor Hine's wife, with the freedom of old friendship, "your ma's always been savin', but I didn't suppose you needed to earn money, as if you was a boy."

"Oh, we aren't poor," cried Sophronia, hugging herself in glee, "we're rich in many ways. And as for not being obliged to work and earn money because I'm not a boy, dear me, Mrs. Hine, I don't see the reasonableness of your remark." She ended in a pirouette that would have been a credit to Abby's agility. "Now, I'll go back and finish this blessed work," and she seized the brown gown once more, put herself in her seat, and controlling her excitement, set the last stitches triumphantly.

"You're the queerest girl I ever see," declared Mrs. Hine, sinking helplessly into her chair again, that creaked fearfully as she did so.

"If you hadn't come in and seen me at this work," went on the girl quickly, "I might never have found out what I could do. Now, will you tell the neighbors and anybody that you see that I am ready to execute any jobs at repairing that they may want done? Will you?" she repeated eagerly.

"Is your ma willing?" asked Mrs. Hine doubtfully.

"Come and see," Sophronia pulled the thread through on its last journey, snipped it off, and giving a hug to the little gown, threw it on the bed. "Come," she repeated.

"I don't know where you'll find her," volunteered Mrs. Hine, heavily following over the stairs, "for I holloed at her—Oh, here you be, Mrs. Tucker," as the kitchen door, opened by Sophronia's eager hand, disclosed the doctor's wife in the act of bringing out from the pantry slices of ham she was intending to fry for dinner.

"Ma! ma!" cried Sophronia, joyfully. "It isn't summer boarders. Oh no, it isn't; it's my fingers—my idle fingers to be set to work."

The doctor's wife stared at her daughter over the plate of ham slices.

"Ain't she green?" cried Mrs. Hine, delighted to see the confusion into which the mother was thrown.

"I'm to do Mrs. Hine's mending for her and the mending of all those in Bingham, who, like her, have no grown up daughters. See, ma, my fingers can help pa, can't they?"

In her joy, Sophronia, regardless of the fate of the ham, that immediately slid off from its resting place to the floor, rushed into her mother's arms.

"Sophronia!" cried the doctor's wife; "when'd you think of it?"

"I didn't think of it; I was too stupid to find it out for myself," cried the girl, radiantly. "Mrs. Hine said she would be willing to pay someone to do her mending. Then it all came to me, 'here's my work,' because you know I can mend, ma."

"You can mend," said the doctor's wife, quietly, "and you are the one who will save pa, I believe. It's a mercy you came in and said that, Mrs. Hine," she turned to the neighbor.

Mrs. Hine rubbed her eyes violently. "Oh, yes, yes," she stammered. "Well, I'll read over my mending this afternoon by Jimmy, as I've got to go to Widow Hildegarde's to-morrow to borrow her saque pattern she told me Sunday I might have. I'll start the news there. 'Twon't be long before it's over Bingham, am Phrony's hands will be full. Now will you let me have your receipt for pound cake, Mrs. Tucker? Mr. Hine's cousin's coming next week, an' he's a master hand at eating cake; an' for once I want enough."

"My Christmas present to pa now is sure," cried Sophronia, as the door closed on Mrs. Hine and her receipt. "Now he won't be awake and worry nights, will he, ma?"

"Oh, Phrony," said the doctor's wife, hurrying forward the belated dinner preparations, "you don't know what a load is off my mind. Why, I thought sometimes I sh'd let it out, this trouble, and I didn't mean to, 'cause if a thing can't be helped, what's the use of speaking of it? This morning when you got to talking about there being no money, why somehow it wouldn't stay in my longer."

"Christmas is three weeks from now," said Sophronia, cutting bread vigorously. "If everything goes well, I'll have quite a little bunch of money to put into pa's hand."

"And none too soon," said her mother, "for the first of January scares him most to death. He isn't used to owing folks, your pa isn't, and the shoemaker has dunned him twice."

"It's the last time Old Cobble will dun pa," said Sophronia proudly. "He shall be paid first of all. What next?"

"Well, the butcher says he will wait, but your pa hates to have him," said Mrs. Tucker.

"Hiram Badger next," said Sophronia, gayly.

"You may not make money so fast as all that, child," said her mother, cautiously. "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched."

"It will be slow work," said Sophronia. "I know that, earning money at such a trade. But you know, Ma, I've got a knack at mending, and besides when folks see that pa has got somebody to help him, they won't talk so much about dunning him, but they'll wait till I can get fairly started."

"And maybe it will set everybody thinking how perhaps it would be as well to pay the country doctor after all, as to let his daughter work so," said Mrs. Tucker, hopefully.

"I don't know about that, ma," said Sophronia, merrily. "Anyway, I'm going to set up my mending basket and put my mind on that. Sh! here's pa. Don't say anything to him about it till Christmas."

But Mrs. Tucker, being a woman, found it impossible to keep still; and that night when they were in bed, and the household still, the doctor beginning on his troubles and the impending worry of the future, she touched his tired hand. "Ell, don't worry, dear. I've some good news."

"There can't be any good news, Martha," he said, despondently. "Folks won't pay. To-day I hinted to Mrs. Brown that my bill had been standing a good while, and she up and told me she'd long been thinking of employing the new doctor over in the Hollow—the young one, you know, who came from Montpelier to cut me out. It's no use trying to get what's mine. I might as well give up."

"Did you know you'd got a young helper, who's going to cut you out in raising money?" asked Mrs. Tucker, facetiously. "There's something to offset the young Hollow doctor."

"What do you mean?" cried the doctor. "Don't joke; I'm too tired to see any fun in one."

"Sophronia's made up her mind that she's going to help you," announced his wife, concisely.

"Sophronia? Why, she's a girl," said the doctor.

"That's true, I s'pose tho' 'tisn't her fault that she wasn't born a boy," observed Mrs. Tucker, composedly.

"Well, what in the world can she do?" demanded the doctor, it must be confessed, a trifle irritably.

And then the plan came out. At it's close the doctor sat straight in bed, his red cotton nightgown bowed on his hands, the tears trickling down the thin fingers—tears of joy in his eldest daughter, and of hope for the dark and threatening future.

"There—there, don't feel so," cried Mrs. Tucker, shaking his arm. "You're all beat out, and I oughtn't to have told you to-night. Do stop—there, that's right," as the doctor looked up and sank back on his pillow.

"One thing more," as she settled to her well-earned rest. "You mustn't look as if you ever thought of her doing anything, or she'll know that I've let the cat out of the bag, for you must be awfully surprised, pa'n Christmas morning—awfully surprised."

Scraps of thread and remnants of frayed materials seemed to adhere lovingly to Sophronia's gown the following days—so much so, that as her mother passed her one morning, she picked one off dutifully, whispering, with one eye on the doctor, over in the corner, making his inevitable and useless bills: "Don't work quite so fast, Phrony; make Miss Blachely wait for her petticoat."

"Hush!" enjoined the girl, with a loving little pinch on the motherly arm. "I can wait. Look at the dear, pottering over his bills. Christmas! and she fairly ran upstairs to her room to the delights of the Blachely petticoats!"

"You didn't hear, pa?" cried the doctor's wife, anxiously, and taking the gray head between her palms. "You know you didn't."

"I really ought to study up cases of deafness," said the doctor, solemnly, and ceasing to fumble among his bills for a moment; "strange how suddenly I'm taken."

"All right," declared Mrs. Tucker, breathing freely as she desisted him, "only keep on being deaf as a post till Christmas, and I'm satisfied."

But Christmas eve everything came near being lost. Miss Ruhmann Stebbins ran in, tongue all ready for a good hour's work, and a bundle of nondescript clothing in her arms. She encountered the doctor in the little entry.

"I congratulate you, doctor," she began volubly, "tho' I don't s'pose, seeing it's always hard for a man to see his eldest child, being she's a girl—"

Mrs. Tucker's in the keeping-room," said the doctor, hospitably, and essaying to get back of the spinster and her load, to open the door.

"Thank you; I'll find my way in there in a minute. But I say to Reuben at supper time, says I'm going to congratulate the doctor if I catch a sight of him, on having such a daughter as Phrony to—"

"Sophronia is a treasure of a daughter," interrupted the doctor gravely. Then he made a dart toward the object of his desires, achieved it, and lifting the latch, sung out, "Mrs. Stebbins has come to see you," and vanished into his office.

The next morning, Abby, who was wild with delight over a store doll with a plaster of Paris head, and a wonderful green gown, that she found sitting up above her pillow and waking, hurried ecstatically into her clothes, to rush out upon the three boys of the family, wilder yet with three new jack-knives.

"Where do you s'pose the money came from?" cried Joel, quite awe-struck.

"This is nothing," said Abby, superbly, holding her doll close, and trying to grasp all the knives, "to what we're going to have, Jo Tucker. Why, it'll be Christmas every day, you see if 'tisn't, after this."

"Christmas every day?" repeated the boys.

"We're very, very rich," declared Abby, coolly noting the effect upon her auditors, while she thrilled excitedly. "I guess Phrony's got a bank somewhere; I saw her take out a pile of money last night and count it—now!"

"It's ended with a triumphant little squeal, and ran down stairs to be met by her mother's, "Run away now, child," and then the door was shut.

"For mercy's sake, do give it to him now, Phrony," Mrs. Tucker begged, turning back into the kitchen. "I declare, I shall fly off the handle if you wait another minute."

"I'm going to put it under his plate," said the girl. Hyw pink the round cheeks were, and how the dark eyes sparkled! She waved a little white paper parcel that chinked pleasantly within, and without looked every inch a Christmas gift, even if "For my dear, dear father," in the blackest of ink, had not run all its length!

"He'd like it better to have it alone with you, I know. Give it to him before breakfast, child."

The parcel hovered in the girl's hand, then came down to be folded securely in the other palm. "Very well, ma," and feeling almost as young as Abby, but resolute for a woman's work of caring for those she loves, Sophronia ran lightly into the little old office where her father was waiting for breakfast.

He was standing before his book-case, and pretended not to hear her coming. She stole softly up, and slipped the little white parcel into his side pocket; then she put both arms around the figure bent with something more than the weight of years, and whispered under the gray hair, "Merry Christmas for my precious, dearest pa!"

If it were Abby she couldn't have been more eager. The doctor laughed, whipped out his red silk handkerchief, and blew his nose violently, she still clinging to him, reiterating, "Do feel in your pocket, pa!"

"Heey—heey—what have we here?" cried the doctor, coming out from behind his handkerchief at last, to stare at the white object that his hand had drawn forth from his hiding place.

Sophronia drew off, and clasped her rosy palms tightly together; her breath came quick and short while she watched him read the "For my dear, dear father," under the string, and lay bare the store of dollar bills, silver half and quarter dollars, and pennies.

The doctor pushed them gently into a pile, then he suddenly reached out his hand, and gathered up the tightly clasped palms. "Child, child," he said, as he felt the rough little forefinger that spoke of many tedious hours of labor, he could go no further.

"Tisn't much," cried Sophronia, happily, "only fourteen dollars and ninety-one cents; but oh, pa, bye-and-bye—"

"Has he got it? Have you given it to him?" cried Mrs. Tucker, hurrying in. "Oh, yes; well, I'm thankful," and she heaved a long sigh, while her round face ran over with satisfaction. "Now, says I, I guess, Eli Tucker, you and I can face the world as brave as any one, country doctor or no country doctor, with Phrony as right hand man. Come, breakfast's ready."—Margaret Sydney, in *Woman*.

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